

Steve Kilbreath Montana Department of Environmental Quality Subdivision Section January 17, 2011

Testimony for HB 28.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee my name is Steve Kilbreath and I represent the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. I am the Section Supervisor for the Subdivision Section; we are responsible for review of all subdivisions in the State under the Sanitation in Subdivisions Act. We review the water, wastewater, storm drainage and solid waste facilities in all subdivisions with lot sizes less than 20 acres. My program probably issues the most ground water mixing zones of any DEQ program due to the volume of subdivision that we approve.

I am here today to support HB 28.

- HB 28 is a very simple bill that came out of the WPIC that requires new mixing zones stay within the external boundary of the subdivision they are in.
- A ground water mixing zone is defined as a portion of an aquifer where initial dilution of a discharge takes place and where water quality standards may be exceeded. In other words a mixing zone is an area that contamination is allowed as long as the groundwater meets certain water quality standards at the downgradient end of the mixing zone.
- Standard mixing zones for septic systems are concerned with nitrogen and range from 100 to 500 feet in length and are controlled by lot size. Source specific mixing zones are available as an option.
- Mixing zones for septic systems have three nitrogen limits depending on what type of treatment is being used.
- By rule drinking water wells may not be placed in a mixing zones and a septic system may or may not be placed in a mixing zone if nitrogen limits are exceed by cumulative impacts.
- By keeping mixing zones confined to the subdivision or having an easement you have solved two problems.
 - O You are protecting public health by eliminating new wells being drilled in the mixing zone and guaranteeing that certain water quality standards are met at the edge of the subdivision.
 - o No neighbors will have mixing zones placed on their lots without their approval so you will be protecting private property rights.
- I am here to answer any questions.







